B. F. Butler.

Character & Results of the war.

1863

E
458
.3
B96

Class E458
.3
Book .B96

CHARACTER AND RESULTS OF THE WAR.

HOW TO PROSECUTE AND HOW TO END IT.

A Thrilling and Eloquent Speech

BY

MAJ.-GEN. B. F. BUTLER.

REPORTED BY A. F. WARBURTON.

After the return of Gen. Butler from the Department of the Gulf, some of the leading citizens of New York, anxious to testify their admiration of his administration of that Department, and their appreciation of his distinguished services on other fields, united in tendering him a public dinner, addressing him the following letter:

"New York, Thursday, January 8, 1863.

"*Major General Benjamin F. Butler, United States Army:*

"Dear Sir,—At a meeting of citizens of this city, held at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, on the evening of the 5th instant, for the purpose of expressing the sense of this community in reference to the public services rendered by you to the country, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

"*Resolved*, That the loyal patriotism, indomitable energy, and great administrative ability shown by Major General Benjamin F. Butler, in the various commands held by him in the service of the country, and especially in his civil and military administration of the duties pertaining to his command of the Department of the Gulf, eminently entitle him to an expression of approbation on the part of the citizens of New York.

"In furtherance of the views thus expressed, it was also resolved that, in addition to such action as may be taken by our municipal authorities, in extending to you the hospitalities of this city, a public dinner be tendered to you by the citizens, and the undersigned were appointed a committee to communicate with you upon the subject.

"We have now the honor to apprize you of the action thus taken, and to ask that you will meet with our citizens at a public dinner at such time, to be appointed by you, as may be consistent with your official duties and your personal convenience.

"In conveying to you this invitation, intended as a tribute of personal respect and esteem, we are well assured that it will not be the less acceptable to you as marked by a still higher significance.

E458
.3
.B96

"The citizens of New York, watching the events of the war with a degree of vigilance and anxiety proportioned to the vast interests and influence which converge toward and radiate from this great commercial centre, have recognized in the course pursued by you in the service and support of the Government, the principles which they deem most essential and indispensable to its triumph. They share with you the conviction that there is no middle or neutral ground between loyalty and treason; that traitors against the Government forfeit all rights of protection and of property; that those who persist in armed rebellion, or aid it less openly but not less effectively, must be put down, and kept down by the strong hand of power, and by the use of all rightful means, and that, so far as may be, the sufferings of the poor and misguided, caused by the rebellion, should be visited upon the authors of their calamities. We have seen with approbation that in applying these principles, amidst the peculiar difficulties and embarrassments incident to your administration in your recent command, you have had the sagacity to devise, the will to execute, and the courage to enforce the measures which they demanded, and we rejoice at the success which has vindicated the wisdom and the justice of your official course. In thus congratulating you upon these results, we believe that we express the feeling of all those who most earnestly desire the speedy restoration of the Union in its full integrity and power; and we trust that you will be able to afford us the opportunity of interchanging with you, in the manner proposed, the patriotic sympathies and hopes which belong to this sacred cause.

"We are, General, with high respect,
Your friends and obedient servants,

Charles King,	C. H. Marshall,	L. Bradish,
George Opdyke,	George W. Parsons,	P. Perit,
Horace Webster,	Peter Cooper,	Hamilton Fish,
Robert Bayard,	Isaac Ferris,	John A. King,
Fred. De Peyster,	Charles H. Russell,	E. D. Morgan,
B. W. Bonney,	Jonathan Sturgis,	L. B. Woodruff,
John Paine,	George Griswold,	Murray Hoffman,
W. F. Havemeyer,	I. N. Phelps,	William A. Booth,
John J. Cisco,	Hiram Barney,	David Hoadley,
John J. Phelps,	Denning Duer,	John E. Williams,
D. Dudley Field,	Morris Ketchum,	E. E. Morgan,
George W. Blunt,	R. H. McCurdy,	William Allen Butler,
Ed. Minturn,	Ambrose Snow,	G. S. Robbins,
S. B. Chittenden,	Alex. W. Bradford,	Marshall O. Roberts,
Elliot C. Cowdin,	William G. Lambert,	J. D. Beers,
Ed. Learned,	Ros. D. Hitchcock,	B. H. Hutton,
Morris Franklin,	Pros. M. Wetmore,	George Folsom,
E. Nye,	Henry H. Elliott,	J. F. Gray, M. D.,
H. K. Bogert,	M. H. Grinnell,	Russell Sturgess,
H. A. Hurlbut,	Amos R. Eno,	Charles Butler,
George Stevenson,	Jno. A. C. Gray,	G. T. Strong,
Hobart Ford,	Seth B. Hunt,	J. Burns,
Charles Gould,	R. G. White,	R. A. McCurdy,
Frank E. Howe,	J. A. Pullen,	Isaac Sherman,
Henry W. T. Mall,	Hamlin Blake,	T. T. Buckley,
Paul Spofford,	J. H. Almy,	E. C. Benedict,

N. Sands,	William C. Noyes,	Shepherd Knapp,
E. P. James,	Joseph Rudd,	E. D. James,
S. Draper,	W. Parker, M. D.	W. H. L. Barnes,
A. Bierstadt,	John Jay,	C. A. Bristed,
L. B. Wyman,	J. Wadsworth,	John B. Hall,
M. B. Field,	William V. Brady,	R. W. Weston,
F. S. Winston,	N. Hayden,	George Dennison,
R. F. Andrews,	William Orton,	C. R. Robert,
Jno. Slosson,	T. G. Churchill,	Joseph Hoxie,
C. H. Ludington,	William C. Bryant,	T. H. Skinner,
Isaac Dayton,	D. Drake Smith,	D. N. Barney,
	Parke Godwin.	

To this, Gen. Butler, at the earliest moment consistent with his official duties, made the following reply:

REPLY OF GENERAL BUTLER.

Lowell, Thursday, March 26, 1863.

"Gentlemen,—The necessities of my position have rendered it exceedingly inconvenient for me earlier to reply to your exquisitely courteous and too kind letter of approval of the administration of my command of the Department of the Gulf, asking me to fix a day when I could meet you as therein proposed.

"With every expression of profoundest gratitude for your invitation to partake of a public dinner with the citizens of New York, allow me to suggest that while I am waiting orders to join my brave comrades in the field, it would not be consonant with my sense of duty to accept your flattering hospitalities.

"To you, gentlemen, at home bearing your share of the burdens and expenses of this unholy war, forced upon us by treason, the tendering of such an expression of approbation of the conduct of a public officer was fit and proper, as it was natural and customary, but my acceptance of it would trench upon a different feeling. I too well know the revulsion of feeling with which the soldier in the field, occupying the trenches, pacing the sentinel's weary path in the blazing heat, or watching from his cold bivouac the stars shut out by the drenching cloud, hears of feasting and merry-making at home by those who ought to bear his hardships with him, and the bitterness with which he speaks of those who, thus engaged, are wearing his uniform.

"Upon the scorching sand, and under the brain-trying sun of the Gulf coast, I have too much shared that feeling to add one pang, however slight, to the discomfort which my fellow-soldiers suffer doing the duties of the camp and field, by my own act, while separated momentarily from them by the exigencies of the public service.

"You will pardon, I am sure, this apparant rudeness of refusal of your most generous proposal, but under such circumstances, I have spoken too bitterly and too often of the participation by absent officers in such occasions to permit myself to take part in one, even when offered in the patriotic spirit which breathes through your letter, desiring to testify approval of my services to the country.

"It would, however, give me much pleasure to testify my gratitude for your kindness by meeting you and your fellow-citizens in a less formal manner, 'interchanging the patriotic sympathies and hopes which belong

to this sacred cause.' Perhaps, by so doing we may do something in aid of that cause. Whatever may strengthen the purpose, deepen the resolution, and fix the determination never to yield this contest until this rebellion, in its roots and branches, in its causes, in its effects and designs, is overthrown and utterly annihilated forever, and the power of the National Government—with its democratizing influences and traditional theories of equality of rights, the equality of laws, and equality of privileges for all, as received from the fathers of the Republic—is actively acknowledged upon every inch of the United States territory, is an aid—nay a necessity—to the cause of the country. To prepare the public mind by doubts, or fears, or suggestions of compromises, or hopes of peace, to be satisfied with any thing less than these demands, is treason to country, humanity, and God — more foul, because more cowardly than rebellion.

"Let, then, every loyal man join hands with his neighbor, sinking all differences of political opinion, which must be minor to this paramount interest, and pledge himself to the fullest support of the Government, with men and means to crush out this treason, and then, and not till then, am I willing to hear anything of political party.

"Again and again returning you my grateful thanks for the courtesy done me by your action, allow me to say that I shall be in New York during the coming week, and shall be happy at any time to meet you, gentlemen, and my fellow citizens, in such manner as they may think fitting.

"Most respectfully, your obedient servant,

"Benjamin F. Butler,

"Major-General U. S. V."

In compliance with Gen. Butler's preferences, as expressed in the above, a public reception was arranged, and took place at the Academy of Music, Thursday evening, April 2d. The welcome then extended to the gallant soldier, was, in all respects, one of the most enthusiastic and significant ever extended to any honored servant of any people. Long before the hour of commencement, the house was filled in every part, our loyal women alone almost filling the balcony and upper circles. Mrs. Butler and Mrs. Banks were present, sitting in the private boxes, and upon the stage were General Wool, General C. M. Clay, and a large number of our well-known citizens.

Previous to the opening of the meeting, Major-General Wool and several officers of his staff entered upon the stage. His appearance was greeted with tremendous cheers. Gen. Wetmore came forward and said:

I am happy to see that this immense audience recognizes one of our noblest heroes, Major-General Wool. [Cheers.]

The applause having subsided, Gen. Wool advanced to the foot-lights, and said:

SPEECH OF GEN. WOOL.

I thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for the honor of this recognition. I am not prepared to make a speech on this occasion. You will have those who can speak to you better than I can do. But permit me to say what you already know — I am for putting down this rebellion, *nolens volens*, and will never concede to any compromise until that is accomplished. [Tremendous cheers.]

The orchestra having concluded a beautiful introductory overture, the Union Glee Club came forward and sang, in an excellent manner, "The

Sword of Bunker Hill." A loud and long *encore* being given by the audience, the Club sang

"Columbia, we love thee,
Land of the free."

The orchestra soon struck up the enlivening strains of "Hail to the Chief," which gave sure indication that

MAJ.-GEN. BUTLER

was approaching. Soon the General made his appearance, and was received with long and loud continued cheers, the ladies waving their handkerchiefs, while the men strained their throats to give the gallant hero the reception which was so justly due him. The *coup d'œil* presented on the General's appearance was superb. Parquet, dress circle, and galleries united in most uproarious cheers, and men seemed almost beside themselves with demonstrative zeal. Handkerchiefs and hats were waved, and the uproar continued for several minutes. Silence being restored, Senator MORGAN introduced Maj-Gen. BUTLER to His Honor Mayor OPDYKE, as follows:

SPEECH OF SENATOR MORGAN.

Mr. MAYOR, — It affords me the greatest pleasure to introduce to you the most efficient officer in the United States service, Maj.-Gen. Benjamin F. Butler. [Loud and continued cheers.] Gen. Butler advanced toward the Mayor, who cordially took his hand, and then addressed him as follows:—

SPEECH OF THE MAYOR.

GENERAL BUTLER, — The gentlemen upon whose invitation you are here, have charged me with the agreeable duty of bidding you welcome to our city, and expressing to you the warm-hearted greeting, not merely of those present, but of every loyal heart in this metropolis. Our citizens have long desired the privilege of testifying to you personally their great respect for your character, and their high appreciation of your public services. In their name I thank you for having now accorded them this privilege. They have watched your public career during the present war with a constantly increasing interest and admiration. They saw you among the first to abandon an honorable lucrative profession, and voluntarily take up arms in defence of a government you loved, although it was administered by those whose election you had earnestly opposed. They felt that no stronger evidence could be adduced of an exalted patriotism.

Your first theatre of military service was in Maryland, a State then trembling in the balance between loyalty and treason, and in whose metropolis soldiers of the Union had been assassinated on their way to the protection of the capital. At that critical period you were fortunately placed in command, first at Annapolis and afterward at Baltimore; and it is, perhaps, not too much to say that it was owing to your judicious management, in which you wisely blended moderation with firmness, that Maryland escaped the criminal folly of secession. At all events, you promptly subdued the outbreaks of treason in that State, and thus rendered it safe for our troops to pass through the city of Baltimore without molestation.

You were next placed in command at Fortress Monroe, where you made the sagacious discovery that slaves were contraband of war. In view of

the tenderness with which our Government and its military commanders had up to that time treated the institution of slavery, this discovery must be regarded as one of the most valuable of the war, and therefore one which entitles you to the public gratitude. It quietly but most effectively divorced the "divine institution" of all its sancity in the presence of war.

From Fortress Monroe you were transferred to a wider field of usefulness, by being placed in command of the Department of the Gulf. Your friends knew that in a position so environed with difficulties as this, no ordinary commander could hope to acquit himself with credit. You soon found yourself, with a handful of men, remote from your base of supplies and from succor, in the metropolis of the Confederacy where the population, with few exceptions, was intensely hostile to the National Government; and the moment they discovered the fidelity and ability with which you upheld the interests of the Government, all their intensity of hatred was transferred to you personally. They grossly misrepresented your acts; they willfully misinterpreted your language; they heaped on you the vilest epithets, and in every conceivable way labored to cover your name with infamy.

The rebel Government and the rebel press throughout the Confederacy took up the theme and repeated these slanders, with every variation that ingenuity could suggest. The rebel chief, in his annual message, even went so far as to brand you as an outlaw, and to decree your execution in case you should fall into the hands of his military forces. They also conferred on you, I believe, the exclusive honor of offering a large reward for your head. Nor were the malignant slanders I have referred to uttered only by the rebels. Their sympathizers at the North and throughout Europe joined in the refrain, and re-echoed their bitter denunciations.

Abuse from the bad, like praise from the good, affords presumptive evidence of merit. Hence, if our Government or its true friends had been ignorant of your policy, they might have safely inferred, from this clamor of its bitter enemies, that that policy was just and wise. But, sir, the loyal people of the North were not ignorant of your acts or your policy. They saw that your capacious and fertile mind, your resolute will, your dauntless courage, and your earnest patriotism, rendered you master of the situation, and fitted you above all other men, for the difficult position in which you were placed. They saw that you fully comprehended your duty as a military commander, as a legislator, as a judge, as an executive officer, and as a tamer of rebel mad men and mad women — for your sphere of duty embraced all these; and they saw that your firm will stood ever ready to execute what your judgment dictated and your conscience approved.

In thus acting, you strengthened the cause of your Government, which is the cause of justice and right. But you at the same time weakened the cause of its enemies, which is the cause of oppression and wrong. For this they hate and revile you; for that we esteem and praise you.

But, sir, you shocked the sensibilities of Secessia and all its partisans in the outer world by that terrible decree, called Order No. 28. That order, as I understand it, was simply intended to extend a salutary police arrangement, which had long existed in New Orleans, so as to bring within its jurisdiction and restraint the improper conduct of those aristocratic dames who gloried in heaping insults on the soldiers of the Union.

It had the desired effect. It improved their manners and their modesty; for which, sir, I doubt not, they will in due time return you thanks instead of execrations, as now. The presence of our wives and daughters here to-night proves that the ladies of New York regard that far-famed order, both in its intention and effects, as proper and salutary.

You gave lessons equally useful to the sterner sex. You taught them to respect the authority of the United States, and to fear its power. You treated as enemies of your country all who avowed themselves as such, and, in strict accordance with the usages of war and the laws of the United States, you confiscated their property and appropriated it to the support of their own poor, and in providing for the wants of your army.

By these and kindred measures you purified the moral, social, and political atmosphere of a city in which each had been rendered most noxious by the unbridled reign of treason and the vices engendered by slavery. By your wise sanitary regulations you also kept the material atmosphere pure, and thus excluded pestilence. As a former resident of New Orleans, I know that to have accomplished this in a city so unhealthy, and where all previous efforts in that direction had failed, must be regarded as one of your noblest achievements. I have little doubt that among its beneficial results was the preservation of the lives of at least one-half of your command. Your troops were all unacclimated. The yellow fever prevailed at nearly all the neighboring ports on the Gulf and in the West Indies, and, but for your vigorous quarantine and strict sanitary regulations within the city, would have become epidemic in New Orleans. In that event, your whole army would have been attacked by it — for none of the unacclimated escape — and it is known that at least fifty per cent. of the cases prove fatal.

By means like these you husbanded your small command and slender means in such a masterly manner that during eight months' service you did not call upon the Government for a dollar, except for the pay of your soldiers; and you turned over to your successor two thousand more troops than you received from your Government, with military lines embracing two-thirds of the population, and nearly that proportion of the territory of the State of Louisiana.

The brief sketch I have thus given of your achievements in the Department of the Gulf might be indefinitely extended. But I have said enough to show that you have made a record of which any commander, however distinguished, might justly feel proud, and which the present and future generations will not fail to appreciate.

We, sir, glory in the fact that our country and our institutions can, in an emergency, produce from private life ready-made military commanders, statesmen and jurists of the highest type, and all combined in a single individual. In your late command you have been called upon to exercise the functions appertaining to each of these, and it must be conceded that you acquitted yourself admirably in all. As a commander you did not prosecute war in the spirit of peace, but with the iron-handed rigor which its necessities demand and its usages justify, and which is and indispensable element of success. As a jurist and lawyer, you proved yourself a perfect master of every code that could be applied to the novel legal questions presented for your decision. In truth, your legal acumen was quite an over-match for that of the leading rebels and their sympathetic consular allies. But sir, it is for the statesmanlike qualities evinced by you in

this contest that your friends are disposed to award you the highest praise. You seem to them to comprehend most perfectly all the principles involved in the present contest, as well as the best means of bringing it to a successful issue. Your pioneer mind, like Daniel Boone, among the border men of the West, seems to keep in advance of all others. You are familiar with the causes that produced the war; you have shared in its progress, and have had leisure since your return from active service to take a dispassionate survey of its present status and its probable future. We shall feel greatly obliged if you will give us your views on such of these topics as may be agreeable to you, feeling well assured that whatever you say will be marked by your accustomed originality of thought and breadth of knowledge, and must therefore prove both interesting and instructive.

Without detaining you longer, General, permit me to renew my assurance of welcome, and then present you to an assemblage worthy of such a guest.

The Mayor, at the conclusion of the address, again took the General cordially by the hand, and presented him to the assembly as one of the best specimens of the volunteer army of the United States. [Prolonged cheers.]

General Butler acknowledged the courteous reception and spoke as follows:

SPEECH OF GEN. BUTLER.

Mr. Mayor,—With the profoundest gratitude for the too flattering commendation of my administration of the various trusts committed to me by the Government, which, in behalf of your associates, you have been pleased to tender, I ask you to receive my most heartfelt thanks. To the citizens of New York here assembled, graced by the fairest and loveliest, in kind appreciation of my services supposed to have been rendered to the country, I tender the deepest acknowledgments. [Applause.] I accept it all, not for myself, but for my brave comrades of the Army of the Gulf. [Renewed applause.] I receive it as an earnest of your devotion to the country—an evidence of your loyalty to the Constitution under which you live, and under which you hope to die.

In order that the acts of the Army of the Gulf may be understood, perhaps it would be well, at a little length, with your permission, that some detail should be given of the thesis upon which we fulfilled our duties. The first question, then, to be ascertained is, what is this contest in which the country is engaged? At the risk of being a little tedious, at the risk, even, of calling your attention to what might seem otherwise too elementary, I propose to run down through the history of the contest to see what it is that agitates the whole country at this day and this hour.

HOW THE REBELLION HAS GROWN FROM A RIOT TO A REVOLUTION.

That we are in the midst of a civil commotion, all know. But what is that commotion? Is it a riot? Is it an insurrection? Is it a rebellion? Or is it a revolution? And pray, sir, although it may seem still more elementary, what is a riot? A riot, if I understand it, is simply an outburst of the passions of a number of men for the moment, in breach of the law, by force of numbers, to be put down and subdued by the civil authorities; if it goes further to be dealt with by the military authorities. But you say, sir, "Why treat us to a definition of a riot upon this occasion? Why, of all things, should you undertake to instruct a New York audience

202

in what a riot is?" [Laughter.] To that I answer, because the Administration of Mr. Buchanan dealt with this great change of affairs as if it were a riot; because his Government officer gave the opinion that in Charleston it was but a riot; and that, as there was no civil authority there to call out the military, therefore, Sumter must be given over to the rioters; and such was the beginning of this struggle. Let us see how it grew up. I deal not now causes but with effects—facts.

Directly after the guns of the rebels had turned upon Sumter, the several States of the South, in Convention assembled, inaugurated a series of movements which took out from the Union divers States; and as each was attempted to be taken out, the riots, if such existed, were no longer found in them, but they became insurrectionary; and the Administration, upon the 15th of April, 1861, dealt with this state of affairs as an insurrection, and called out the militia of the United States to suppress an insurrection. I was called at that time into the service to administer the laws in putting down an insurrection. I found a riot at Baltimore. The rioters had burned bridges; but the riot had hardly arisen to the dignity of an insurrection, because the State had not moved as an organized community. A few men were rioting at Baltimore; and as I marched into the State at the head of United States troops, the question came up, What have I before me? You will remember that I offered then to put down all kinds of insurrections so long as the State of Maryland remained loyal to the United States. Transferred from thence to a wider sphere at Fortress Monroe, I found that the State of Virginia, through its organization, had taken itself out of the Union, and was endeavoring to erect for itself an independent government; and I dealt with that State as being in rebellion, and thought the property of the rebels, of whatever name or nature, should be deemed rebellious property, and contraband of war, subject to the laws of war. [Great applause.]

CHARGE OF POLITICAL INCONSISTENCY REFUTED.

I have been thus careful in stating these various steps, because, although through your kindness replying to eulogy, I am here answering every charge of inconsistency and wrong of intention for my acts done before the country. Wrong in judgment I may have been; but, I insist, wrong in intention or inconsistent with my former opinions, never. Upon the same theory by which I felt myself bound to put down insurrection in Maryland, while it remained loyal, whether that insurrection was the work of blacks or whites—by the same loyalty to the Constitution and laws, I felt bound to confiscate slave property in the rebellious State of Virginia. [Applause.] Pardon me, sir, if right here I say that I am a little sensitive upon this topic. I am an old-fashioned Andrew Jackson Democrat of twenty years' standing. [Applause. A voice: "The second hero of New Orleans." Renewed applause culminating in three cheers.] And so far as I know, I have never swerved, so help me God, from one of his teachings. [Great applause.] Up to the time that disunion took place, I went as far as the farthest in sustaining the constitutional rights of the States. However bitter or distasteful to me were the obligations my fathers had made for me in the compromise of the Constitution, it was not for me to pick out the sweet from the bitter; and, fellow-democrats, I took them all [loud cheers] because they were constitutional obligations; [applause] and sustaining them all, I stood by the South and by Southern

rights under the Constitution until I advanced so far as to look into the very pit of disunion into which they plunged, and then not liking the prospect I quietly withdrew. [Immense applause and laughter.] And from that hour we went apart, how far apart you can judge when I tell you, that on the 28th December, 1860, I shook hands on terms of personal friendship with Jefferson Davis, and on the 28th of December, 1862, you had the pleasure of reading his proclamation that I was to be hanged at sight. [Great applause and laughter.]

THE SOUTH FORFEITS ITS CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS BY REBELLION.

And now, my friends, if you will allow me to pause for a moment in this line of thought, as we come up to the point of time, when these men laid down their constitutional obligations, let me ask, What then were my rights, and what were theirs? At that hour they repudiated the Constitution of the United States, by vote in solemn Convention; and not only that, but they took arms in their hands, and undertook by force to rend from the Government what seemed to them the fairest portion of the heritage which my fathers had given to you and me as a rich legacy for our children. When they did that, they abrogated, abnegated, and forfeited every constitutional right, and released me from every constitutional obligation, so far as they were concerned. [Loud cheers.]

SLAVERY WAS NO LONGER UNDER THE CONSTITUTION.

Therefore when I was thus called upon to say what should be my action thereafter with regard to slavery, I was left to the natural instincts of my heart, as prompted by a Christian education in New England, and I dealt with it accordingly. [Immense applause.] The same sense of duty to my constitutional obligations, and to the rights of the several States that required me, so long as those States remained under the Constitution, to protect the system of slavery, — that same sense of duty after they had gone out from under the Constitution, caused me to follow the dictates of my own untrammelled conscience. So you see — and I speak now to my old Democratic friends — that, however misjudging I may have been, we went along together, step by step, up to the point of disunion; and I claim that we ought still to go on in the same manner. We acknowledged the right of those men to hold slaves, because it was guaranteed to them by the compromise of our fathers in the Constitution; but if their State rights were to be respected, because of our allegiance to the Constitution and our respect for State rights, when that sacred obligation was taken away by their own traitorous acts, and we, as well as the negroes, were disenthralled, why should not we follow the dictates of God's law and humanity? [Tremendous applause, and cries of "Bravo, Bravo."]

LOUISIANA HAD SECEDED AND REVOLUTIONIZED.

By the exigencies of the public service removed once more to another sphere of action, at New Orleans, I found this problem coming up in another form, and that led me to examine and see how far had progressed this civil commotion, now carried on by force of arms. I believe, under our complex system of States, each having an independent government, with the United States covering all, that there can be treason to a State and not to the United States; revolution in a State and not as regards the United States; loyalty to a State and disloyalty to the Union; and loy-

alty to the Union and disloyalty to the organized Government of a State. As an illustration, take the troubles which lately arose in the State of Rhode Island, where there was an attempt to rebel against the State Government and to change the form of that Government, but no rebellion against the United States. All of you are familiar with the movements of Mr. Dorr; in that matter there was no intent of disloyalty against the United States, but a great deal against the State Government.

I therefore in Louisiana found a State Government that had entirely changed its form, and had revolutionized itself so far as it could; had created courts and imposed taxes; and put in motion all kinds of governmental machinery; and so far as her State Government was concerned, Louisiana was no longer in and of itself one of the United States of America. It had, so far as depended on its own action, changed its State Government, and by solemn act forever seceded from the United States of America and attempted to join a new National Government.—hostile to us, as one of the so-called Confederate States. I found, I respectfully submit, a revolutionized State! There had been a revolution, by force; beyond a riot, which is an infraction of the law; beyond an insurrection, which is an abnegation of the law; beyond a rebellion, which is an attempt to override the law by force of numbers; a new State Government formed, that was being supported by force of arms.

THEY ARE ALIEN ENEMIES.

Now, I asked myself, upon what thesis shall I deal with this people? Organized into a community under forms of law, they had seized a portion of the territory of the United States, and were holding it by force of arms; and I respectfully submit I had to deal with them as alien enemies.—[Great applause.] They had forever passed the boundary of "wayward sisters," or "erring brothers," unless indeed they erred toward us as Cain did against his brother Abel. They had passed beyond brotherhood by treason added to murder. Aye, and Louisiana had done this in the strongest possible way, for she had seized on territory which the Government of the United States had bought and paid for, and to which her people could advance no shadow of claim, save as citizens of the United States. Therefore I dealt with them as alien enemies. [Applause.]

THE RIGHTS OF ALIEN ENEMIES CAPTURED IN WAR.

And what rights have alien enemies captured in war? They have the right, so long as they behave themselves and are non-combatants, to be free from personal violence; they have no other rights; and therefore, it was my duty to see to it, (and I believe the record will show, I did see to it) [great applause and loud cheers] that order was preserved, and that every man who behaved well, and did not aid the Confederate States, was not molested in his person. I held, by the laws of war, that everything else they had was at the mercy of the conqueror. They have claims to mercy and clemency; but no rights. [Cheers.] Permit me to state the method in which their rights were defined by one gentleman of my staff. He very coolly paraphrased the Dred Scott decision, and said they had no rights which a negro was bound to respect. [Loud and prolonged laughter and cheers.] But, dealing with them in this way, I took care to protect all men in personal safety.

INDIVIDUALS MUST TAKE THE FATE OF COMMUNITIES.

Now, I hear a friend behind me say: "But how does your theory affect loyal men?" The difficulty in answering that proposition, is this: in governmental action the Government, in making peace and carrying on war, cannot deal with individuals, but with organized communities, whether organized wrongly or rightly [cheers]; and all I could do, so far as my judgment taught me, for the individual loyal citizen, was to see to it that no exaction should be made of him, and no property taken away from him, that was not absolutely necessary for the success of military operations. I know nothing else that I could do. I could not alter the carrying on of the war, because loyal citizens were, unfortunately, like Dog Tray, found in bad company [laughter]; to their persons, and to their property. even, all possible protection I caused to be afforded. But let me repeat—for it is quite necessary to keep this in mind, and I am afraid that for want of so doing, some of my old Democratic friends have got lost, in going with one portion of the country rather than the other, in their thoughts and feelings—let me repeat that, in making war or making peace, carrying on governmental operations of any sort. governments and their representatives, so far as I am instructed, can deal only with organized communities, and men must fall or rise with the communities in which they are situated. You in New York must follow the Government as expressed by the will of the majority of your State, until you can revolutionize that Government and change it; and those loyal at the South must, until this contest comes into process of settlement, also follow the action of the organized majorities in which their lot has been cast, and no man, no set of men, can see the possible solution of this or any other governmental problem, as affecting States, except upon this basis.

THE CONTEST HAS COME TO BE BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND HER ENEMIES.

Now, then, to pass from the particular to the general, to leave the detail in Louisiana, of which I have run down the account, rather as illustrating my meaning than otherwise. I come back to the question: What is now the nature of the contest with all the States that are banded together in the so-called Confederate States? Into what form has it come? It started in insurrection; it grew up a rebellion; it has become a revolution, and carries with it all the rights and incidents of a revolution.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS SO TREATED IT.

Our Government has dealt with it upon that ground. When the Government blockaded Southern ports, they dealt with it as a revolution; when they sent out cartels of exchange of prisoners, they dealt with these people no longer as simple insurrectionists and traitors, but as organized revolutionists, who had set up a government for themselves upon the territory of the United States.

THE RIGHT OF REVOLUTION NOT ACKNOWLEDGED.

Sir, let no man say to me, "*Why, then you acknowledge the right of revolution in these men!*" I beg your pardon, sir; I only acknowledge the *fact* of revolution—that which has actually happened. I look these things in the face, and I do not dodge them because they are unpleasant; I find this a revolution, and these men are no longer, I repeat, our erring brethren, but

they are our alien enemies, foreigners [cheers] carrying on war against us, attempting to make alliances against us, attempting surreptitiously to get into the family of nations. I agree that it is not a successful revolution, and a revolution never to be successful [loud cheers],—pardon me, I was speaking theoretically, as a matter of law,—never to be successful until acknowledged by the parent State. Now, then, I am willing to unite with you in your cheers, when you say a revolution, the rightfulness or success of which we, the parent State, never will acknowledge. [Cheers.]

THE LOGICAL DEDUCTIONS FROM THIS TRUTH.

Why, sir, have I been so careful in bringing down with great particularity these distinctions? Because, in my judgment, there are certain logical consequences following from them as necessarily as various corollaries from a problem in Euclid. If we are at war, as I think, with a foreign country, to all intents and purposes, how can a man here stand up and say that he is on the side of that foreign country and not be an enemy to his country? [Cheers.]

A LOYAL MAN MUST BE FOR HIS COUNTRY.

A man must be either for his country or against his country. [Cheers.] He cannot, upon this theory, be throwing impediments all the time in the way of the progress of his Government, under pretense that he is helping some other portion of his country. If any loyal man thinks that he must do something to bring back his erring brethren, (if he likes that form of phrase), at the South, let him take his musket and go down and try it in that way. [Cheers.] If he is still of a different opinion, and thinks that is not the best way to bring them back, but he can do it by persuasion and talk, let him go down with me to Louisiana, and I will set him over to Mississippi, and if the rebels do not feel for his heart-strings, but not in love, I will bring him back. [Cheers, loud and prolonged. "Send Wood down first!"] Let us say to him: "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve. If the Lord thy God be God, serve him; if Baal be God, serve ye him. [Cheers.] But no man can serve two masters, God and Mammon. ["That's so."]

WE ARE NOT BOUND TO THEM BY POLITICAL OR PARTY TIES.

Again, there are other logical consequences to flow from the view which I have ventured to take of this subject, and one is as regards to our relations from past political action. If they are now alien enemies, I am bound to them by no ties of party fealty or political affinity. They have passed out of that, and I think we ought to go back only to examine and see if all ties of party allegiance and party fealty as regards them are not broken, and satisfy ourselves that it is your duty and mine to look simply to our country and to its service, and leave them to look to the country they are attempting to erect, and to its service; and then let us try the conclusion with them, as we are doing by arms and the stern arbitrament of war. Mark, by this I give up no territory of the United States. Every foot that was ever circumscribed on the map by the lines around the United States belong to us. [Applause.] None the less because bad men have attempted to organize worse government upon various portions of it. It is to be drawn in under our laws and our Government as soon as the power of the United States can be exerted for that purpose, and, therefore, my

friends, you see the next one of the logical consequences that proceed from our theory; that we have no occasion to carry on the fight for the Constitution as it is.

NOBODY OPPOSES THE CONSTITUTION—NO MAN NEED FIGHT FOR IT.

Who is interfering with the Consiitution as it is? Who makes any attacks upon the Constitution? We are fighting with those who have gone out and repudiated the Constitution, and made another Constitution for themselves. [Cheers.] And now, my friends, I do not know but I shall speak some heresy, but as a Democrat, and as an Andrew Jackson Democrat, I am not for the Union as it was. [Great cheering. "Good!" "Good!"] I say, as a Democrat, as an Andrew Jackson Democrat, I am not for the Union to be again as it was. Understand me; I was for the Union, because I saw, or thought I saw, the troubles in the future which have burst upon us; but having undergone those troubles, having spent all this blood and this treasure, I do not mean to go back again and be cheek by jowl with South Carolina as I was before, if I can help it. [Cheers. "You're right."]

NO PORTION OF THE UNION TO BE GIVEN UP.

Mark me, now, let no man misunderstand me, and I repeat, lest I may be misunderstood—there are none so slow to understand as those who do not want to—mark me, I say I do not mean to give up a single inch of the soil of South Carolina. If I had been in public life at that time, and had had the position, the will, and the ability, I would have dealt with South Carolina as Jackson did, and kept her in the Union at all hazards, but now she has gone out, and I will take care that when she comes in again, she comes in better behaved [cheers], that she shall no longer be the firebrand of the Union—aye, and that she shall enjoy what her people never yet have enjoyed—the blessings of a Republican form of Government. [Applause.]

NO RECONSTRUCTION WITH SOUTH CAROLINA TO MAKE MISCHIEF.

Therefore, in that view, I am not for the reconstruction of the Union as it was. I have spent treasure and blood enough upon it, in conjunction with my fellow-citizens to make it a little better. [Cheers.] I think we can have a better Union the next time. It was good enough if it had been let alone. The old house was good enough for me, but as they have pulled down all the L part, I propose, when we build it up, to build it up with all the modern improvements. [Prolonged laughter and applause.]

THE RIGHT TO CONFISCATE PROPERTY OF REBELS.

Another of the logical sequences, it seems to me, that follow in inexorable and not-to-be-shunned sequence upon this proposition, that we are dealing with alien enemies, is with regard to our duties as to the confiscation of rebel property, and that question would seem to me to be easy of settlement under the Constitution, and without any discussion, if my first proposition is right. Has it not been held from the beginning of the world down to this day, from the time the Israelites took possession of the Land of Canaan, which they got from alien enemies—and is it not the well settled law of war to-day, that the whole property of alien enemies belonged to the conqueror, and that it is at his mercy and his clemency what should be done with it?

205

REBEL PROPERTY TO BE DIVIDED AMONG UNION SOLDIERS.

For one, I would take it and give the loyal man who was loyal in his heart, at the South, enough to make him as well as he was before, and I would take the balance of it and distribute it among the volunteer soldiers who have gone —— [the remainder of the sentence was drowned in a tremendous burst of applause.] And so far as I know them, if we should settle South Carolina with them, in the course of a few years I would be quite willing to receive her back into the Union. [Renewed applause.]

FREEDOM OF THE SLAVE CONSTITUTIONAL UNDER THE LAWS OF WAR.

This theory shows us how to deal with another proposition: What shall be done with the slaves? Here again the laws of war have long settled, with clearness and exactness, that it is for the conqueror, for the government which has maintained or extended its jurisdiction over conquered territory, to deal with slaves as it pleases, to free them or not as it chooses. It is not for the conquered to make terms, or to send their friends into the conquering country to make terms for them. [Applause.] Another corollary follows from the proposition that we are fighting with alien enemies, which relieves us from a difficulty which seems to trouble some of my old Democratic friends, and that is in relation to the question of arming the negro slaves.

IT IS CONSTITUTIONAL TO ARM THE NEGROES.

If the seceded States are alien enemies, is there any objection that you know of, and if so, state it, to our arming one portion of the foreign country against the other while they are fighting us? [Applause, and cries of "No!" "No!"] Suppose that we were at war with England. Who would get up here in New York and say that we must not arm the Irish, lest they should hurt some of the English? [Applause.] And yet at one time, not very far gone, all those Englishmen were our grandfathers' brothers. Either they or we erred; but we are now separate nations. There can be no objection, for another reason, because there is no law of war or of nations, — no rule of Governmental action that I know of, — which prevents a country from arming any portion of its citizens; and if the slaves do not take part in the rebellion, they become simply our citizens residing in our territory which is at present usurped by our enemies to be used in its defence as other citizens are. [Applause.] At this waning hour, I do not propose to discuss, but merely to hint at these various subjects. [Cries of "Go on."]

THE NEGROES WILL FIGHT.

There is one question I am frequently asked, and most frequently by my old Democratic friends: — "Gen. Butler, what is your experience? Will the negroes fight?" To that I answer, I have no personal experience, because I left the Department of the Gulf before they were fairly brought into action. But they did fight under Jackson, at Chalmette. More than that; let Napoleon III. answer, who has hired them to do what the veterans of the Crimea cannot do — to whip the Mexicans. Let the veterans of Napoleon I., under Le Clerc, who were whipped by them out of San Domingo, say whether they will fight or not. What has been the demoralizing effect upon them as a race by their contact with white men, I know

not; but I cannot forget that their fathers would not have been slaves, but that they were captives of war, in their own country, in hand to hand fights among the several chiefs. They would fight at some time; and if you want to know any more than that, I can only advise you to try them. [Great applause.]

WE HAVE GREATER CLAIMS ON NEUTRAL NATIONS BY TREATING THIS AS A REVOLUTION.

Passing to another logical deduction from the principle that we are carrying on war against alien enemies, (for I pray you to remember that I am only carrying out the same idea upon which the Government acted when it instituted the blockade,) I meet the question whether we thereby give foreign nations any greater rights than if we considered them as a rebellious portion of our country. We have heretofore seemed to consider that if we acknowledged that this was a revolution, and the rebels were alien enemies in this fight, that therefore we should give to foreign nations greater apparent right to interfere in our affairs than they would have if the insurgents were considered and held by us as rebels only, in a rebellious part of our own country. The first answer to that is this: that so far as the rebels are concerned, they are estopped to deny that they are exactly what they claim themselves to be, alien enemies; and so far as foreign nations are concerned, while the rebels are alien to us, yet they are upon our territory, and until we acknowledge them, there is no better settled rule of the law of nations, than that the recognition of them as an independent nation is an act of war. They have no more right to recognize them, because we say to them, "We will deal with you as belligerent alien enemies," than they would have to treat with them if we hold them simply as rebels; and no country is more sternly and strongly bound by that view than is England, because she claimed the recognition by France of our independence to be an act of war, and declared war accordingly. [Applause.] Therefore, I do not see why we lose any rights. We do not admit that this is a rightful rebellion—we do not recognize it as such—we do not act toward it except in the best way we can to put it down and to re-revolutionize the country. What is the duty, then, of neutrals, if these are alien enemies? We thus find them a people with whom no neutral nation has any treaty of amity or alliance: they are strangers to every neutral nation. For example, let us take the English. The English nation have no treaty with the rebels—have no relations with the rebels—open relations I mean [laughter], none that are recognized by the laws of nations. They have a treaty of amity, friendship and commerce with us, and now what is their duty in the contest between us and our enemies, to whom they are strangers? They claim it to be neutrality, only such neutrality as they should maintain between two friendly nations with each of whom they have treaties of amity. Let me illustrate: I have two friends that have got into a quarrel—into a fight, if you please; I am on equally good terms with both, and I do not choose to take a part with either. I treat them as belligerents, and hold myself neutral. That is the position of a nation, where two equally friendly nations are fighting. But, again, I have a friend who is fighting with a stranger, with whom I have nothing to do, of whom I know nothing that is good, of whom I have seen nothing except that he would fight—what is my duty to my friend, in that case? To stand perfectly neutral? It is not the part of a friend so to do, be-

tween men, and it is not the part of a friendly nation as between nations. And yet, from some strange misconception, our English friends profess to do no more than to stand perfectly neutral, while they have treaties of amity and commerce with us and no treaty which they acknowledge with the South. (Applause.)

THE DUTY OF FOREIGN NATIONS TOWARD THE UNITED STATES IN THIS CONTEST.

And, therefore, I say there is a much higher duty on the part of foreign nations toward us when we are in contest with a people with which they have no treaty of amity, than there possibly can be toward them. To illustrate how this fact bears upon this question: the English say, "Oh! we are going to be neutral; we will not sell you any arms, because to be neutral strictly we should have to sell the same to the Confederates." To that I answer: You have treaties of amity and commerce with us by which you have agreed to trade with us. You have no treaty of amity and commerce with them by which you agree to trade with them. Why not, then, trade with us? why not give us that rightful preference, except for reasons of hostility to us that I will state hereafter? I have been thus particular upon this, because in stating my proposition to gentlemen in whose judgment I have great confidence, they have said to me, "I agree with your theory, Mr. Butler, but I am afraid you will involve us with other nations, by the view that you take of that matter." But I insist, and I can only state the proposition, for want of time—your own minds will carry it out particularly—I insist that there is a higher and closer duty to us—treating the rebels as a strange nation, not yet admitted into the family of nations—that there is a higher duty from our old friendship on her part, from our old relations toward Great Britain, than there is to this rebellious, pushing, attempting-to-get-into-place member of the family of nations.

HOW THE COUNTRY MAY BE RE-UNITED.

There is still another logical sequence which, in my judgment, follows from this view of the case. The great question put to me by my friends, and the great question which is now agitating this country, is, How are we to get these men back? how are we to get this territory back? how are we to re-construct the nation? I think it is much better answered upon this hypothesis than any other: There are but two ways in which this contest can be ended; one is by re-revolutionizing a portion of this seceding territory, and have the people ask to be admitted into the Union; another is, to bring it all back, so that if they do not come back in the first way, they shall come back bound to our triumphal car of victory. [Applause.] Now, when any portion of the South becomes loyal to the North and to the Union, or, to express it with more care, when any portion of the inhabitants of the South wish to become again a part of the nation, and will throw off the government of Jefferson Davis, erect themselves into a State, and come and ask us to take them back with such a State Constitution as they ought to be admitted under, there is no difficulty in its being done. There is no witchery about this. This precise thing has been done in the case of Western Virginia. She went out—stayed out for a while. By the aid of our armies, and by the efforts of her citizens, she re-revolutionized; threw off the Government of the rest of the

State of Virginia; threw off the Confederate yoke; erected herself into a State, with a Constitution such as I believe is quite satisfactory to all of us, especially the amendment. [Applause.] She has asked to come back, and has been received back, and is the first entering wedge of that series of States who will come back that way. But suppose they will not come back? We are bound to subjugate them. What, then, do they become? Territories of the United States — [great applause] — acquired by force of arms — [renewed applause] — precisely as we acquired California, precisely as we acquired Nevada, precisely as we acquired — not exactly, though — as we acquired Texas — [laughter]; and then is there any difficulty in treating with these men? Was there any difficulty in dealing with the State of California, when our men went there and settled in sufficient numbers so as to give that State the benefits of the blessings of a republican form of Government? Was there any difficulty in obtaining her, beyond our transactions with Mexico? None whatever. Will there be any difficulty in taking to ourselves the new State of Nevada when she is ready to come and ripe to come? Was there any difficulty in taking into the Union any portion of the Louisiana purchase, when we bought it first? Will there be any difficulty, when her people get ready to come back to the United States, of our taking her back again, more than, perhaps, to carry out the parallel a little further, to pay a large sum of money besides, as we did in the case of California after we conquered it from Mexico? These States having gone out without cause, without right, without grievance, and having formed themselves into new States, and taken upon themselves new alliances, I am not for having them come back without readmission. I feel, perhaps, if the ladies will pardon the illustration, like a husband whose wife has run away with another man, and has divorced herself from him; he will not take her to his arms until they have come before the priest and been remarried. [Laughter.] I have, I say, the same feeling in the case of these people that have gone out; when they repent, and ask to come back, I am ready to receive them; and I am not ready until then.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE ARMY OF THE GULF VINDICATED.

And now, having gone by far too discursively over many of these points which I desired to bring to your attention, let us return to what has been done, in the Department of the Gulf, to which you have so flatteringly alluded, and to which I will answer. While I am very much gratified at the kind expression of your regard, whether that expression is justified can be told in a single word. When I left the Department of the Gulf, I sat down and deliberately put in the form of an address,* to the people of that Department, the exact acts I had done while in their Department; I said to them, "I have done these things," I have now waited more than three months, and I have yet to hear a denial from that Department that the things therein stated were done. [Applause.]

GEN. BUTLER'S ANSWER TO ALL CALUMNIES.

And to that alone, sir, I can point as a justification of your too flattering eulogy, and to that I point forever as my answer to every slander and every calumny. The ladies of New Orleans knew whether they were safe; has any one of them ever said she was not? The men of New Orleans knew whether life and property were safe; has any man ever said they

* The Address is added as an appendix.

were not? The poor of New Orleans knew whether the money which was taken from the rich rebels, was applied to the alleviation of their wants; has any man denied that it was? To that record I point — and it will be the only answer that I shall ever make; and I only do it now, because I desire that you shall have neither doubt nor feeling upon this subject — it is the only answer I can ever make to the thousand calumnies that have been poured upon me and mine, and upon the officers who worked with me for the good of our country. [Applause.]

THE PROSPECT OF A SUCCESSFUL TERMINATION OF THE WAR.

I desire now to say a single word upon the question, what are the prospects of this war? My simple opinion would be no better than that of another man; but let me show you the reason for the faith that is in me that this war is progressing steadily to a successful termination. Compare the state of the country on January 1, 1863, with the state of the country on January 1, 1862, and tell me whether there has not been progress. At that time the Union armies held no considerable portion of Missouri, of Kentucky, or of Tennessee; none of Virginia, except Fortress Monroe and Arlington Heights; none of North Carolina save Hatteras, and none of South Carolina save Port Royal. All the rest was ground of struggle at least, and all the rest furnishing supplies to the rebels. Now they hold none of Missouri, none of Kentucky, none of Tennessee, for any valuable purpose of supplies, because the western portion is in our hands, and the eastern portion has been so run over by the contending armies that the supplies are gone. They hold no portion of Virginia valuable for supplies, for that is eaten out by their armies. We hold one-third of Virginia, and half of North Carolina. We hold our own in South Carolina; and I hope that before the 11th of this month, we shall hold a little more. [Applause.] We hold two-thirds of Louisiana, in wealth and population. We hold all Arkansas, and all Texas, so far as supplies are concerned, so long as Farragut is between Port Hudson and Vicksburg. [Applause.] And I believe the colored troops held Florida, at the last accounts. Now, then, let us see to what the rebellion is reduced. It is reduced to the remainder of Virginia, part of North and South Carolina, all of Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, and a small portion of Louisiana and Tennessee; Texas and Arkansas, as I said before, being cut off. Why I draw strong hopes from this is, that their supplies come either from Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, Arkansas, or Texas, and these are now completely beyond their reach. To this fact I look largely for the suppression of this rebellion, and the overthrow of this revolution.

OUR RESOURCES COMPARED WITH THOSE OF THE REBELS.

They have got to the end of their conscription; we have not begun ours. They have got to the end of their national credit; we have not put ours in any market in the world. [Applause.] And why should any man be despondent? why should any man say that this great work has gone on too slowly? why should men feel impatient? The war of the Revolution was seven years. Why should men be so anxious that nations should march faster than they are prepared to march — faster than the tread of nations has ever been in the Providence of God? Nations in war have ever moved slowly. We are too impatient — we never learn anything, it would seem to me, from reading history — I speak of myself as well as

you — I have shared in that impatience myself. I have shared in your various matters of disappointment.

THE NAVY VINDICATED FOR NOT CATCHING THE ALABAMA.

I was saying but the other day, to a friend of mine, "It seems strange to me that our navy cannot catch that steamer *Alabama;* there must be something wrong in the Navy Department, I am afraid." and I got quite impatient. I had hardly got over the wound inflicted by the capture of the *Jacob Bell,* when came the piracies of the *Golden Eagle,* and the *Olive Jane,* and as one was from Boston, it touched me keenly. [Applause.] He replied: "Don't be impatient; remember that Paul Jones, with a sailing ship on the coast of England, put the whole British navy at defiance for many months, and wandered up and down that coast, and worked his will upon it, [applause,] and England had no naval power to contend with, and had not twenty-five hundred miles of sea-coast to blockade as we have. I remember that in the French war, Lord Cochrane, with one vessel, and that was by no means a steam-ship, held the whole French coast in terror against the French navy." And so it has been done by other nations. Let us have a little patience, and possess our souls with a little patriotism, and less politics, and we shall have no difficulty. [Applause, and "Good."]

THE OUTRAGES OF ENGLAND TOWARD THE UNITED STATES.

But there is one circumstance of this war, I am bound to say in all frankness to you, that I do not like the appearance of, and that is, because we cannot exactly reach it. I refer to the war made upon our commerce, which is not the fault of the navy, nor of any department of the Government, but is the fault of our allies. [Applause.] Pardon me a moment, for I am speaking now in the commercial city of New York, where I think it is of interest to you, and of a matter to which I have given some reflection—pardon me a moment, while we examine and see what England has done. She agreed to be neutral—I have tried to demonstrate to you that she ought to have been a little more than neutral—but has she been even that? ["No, no, no."] Let us see the evidences of that "no." In the first place, there has been nothing of the Union cause that her orators and her statesmen have not maligned—there has been nothing of sympathy or encouragement which she has not afforded our enemies—there has been nothing which she could do under the cover of neutrality which she has not done to aid them. ["That is true."] Nassau has been a naval arsenal for pirate rebel boats to refit in. Kingston has been their coal depot, and Barbadoes has been the dancing hall to *fete* pirate chieftains in. (Applause.)

THE SYMPATHY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WITH THE ENGLISH PEOPLE—THE HATRED OF HER ARISTOCRACY.

What cause, my friends—what cause, my countrymen, has England so to deal with us? What is the reason she does so deal with us? Is it because we have never shown sympathy toward her or love to her people? And mark me here, that I make a distinction between the English people as a mass and the English Government. (Applause.) I think the heart of her people beats responsive to ours—(applause)—but I know her Government and aristocracy hate us with a hate which passeth all understanding. (Applause.) I say, let us see if we have given any cause for this. I know, I think, what the cause is; but let us see what we have done.

OUR CHARITIES TO THE STARVING POOR OF ENGLAND AND IRELAND.

You remember that when the famine overtook the Irish in 1847, the *Macedonian* frigate carried out the bread from this country to feed the poor that England was starving. (Applause.) When afterward the heir to her throne arrived here, aye, in this very house, our people assembled to do him welcome in such numbers that the very floor would not uphold them (laughter,) and to testify our appreciation of the high qualities of his mother and sovereign, and our love of the English people—we gave him such a reception as Northern gentlemen give to their friends; and his present admirers at Richmond gave him such a reception as Southern gentlemen give to their friends. (Laughter and applause.) What further has been done by us? No, I have no right to claim any portion of it. What has been done by the merchants of New York? The *George Griswold* goes out to feed the starving poor of Lancashire, to which yourselves all contributed, and it was only God's blessing on that charity that prevented that vessel being overhauled and burned by the *Alabama*, fitted out from an English port. (Applause.)

THE ENGLISH REBEL PIRATE FLEET.

And to-day, at Birkenhead, the *Sumter* is being fitted out—at Barbadoes the captain of the *Florida* is being *fitted*—and somewhere the "290," the cabalistic number of the British merchants who contributed to her construction, is preying upon our commerce, while we hear that at Glasgow a steamer is being built for the Emperor of China—(laughter)—and at Liverpool another is about to be launched for the Emperor of China. Pardon me, I don't believe the Emperor of China will buy many ships of Great Britain, until they bring back the silk gowns they stole out of his palace at Pekin. (Laughter and great applause.) And even now, I say that our commerce is being preyed upon, by ships in the hands of the rebels, built by English builders. (Cries of "That's so.") And I ask the merchants of the city of New York whether it has not already reached the point where our commerce, to be safe, has to be carried in British bottoms. [Great applause.]

ENGLISH TREACHERY AND DUPLICITY.

Now, I learn from the late correspondence of Earl Russell with the rebel commissioner Mason, that the British have put two articles of the treaty of Paris in compact with the rebels—first, that enemies' goods shall be covered by neutral flags, and there shall be free trade at the ports, and open trade with neutrals. Why didn't Great Britain put the other part of the treaty in compact; namely, that there should be no more privateering, if she was honest and earnest, and did not mean our commerce should be crippled by rebel piracy? Again, when we took from her deck our two senators and rebel ambassadors, Slidell and Mason, and took them, in my judgment, according to the laws of nations, what did she do but threaten us with war? I agree that it was wisely done, perhaps, not to provoke war at that time—we were not quite in a condition for it—but I thank God, and that always, that we are fast getting in a condition to remember that threat always, and every day! [Tremendous applause, and waving of handkerchiefs, and cries of "Good!"] Why is it all this has been done? *Because we alone can be the commercial rivals of Great Britain!* and because the South has no commercial marine.

OUR COMMERCE TO BE RUINED.

There has been, in my judgment, a deliberate attempt on the part of Great Britain, under the plea of neutrality, to allow our commerce to be ruined, for her own benefit, if human actions indicate human thoughts. [Cries of "That is so."] It is idle to tell me Great Britain does not know these vessels are fitted out in her ports. It is idle and insulting to tell me that she put the *Alabama* under $20,000 bonds, not to go into the service of the Confederate States. The *Jacob Bell* alone would pay the amount of the bond over and over again.

WE PRESERVED OUR NEUTRALITY IN THE WAR WITH RUSSIA.

We did not so deal with her when she was at war with Russia. On the suggestion of the British Minister, our Government stopped, with the rapidity of lightning, the sailing of a steamer, supposed to be for Russia, until the minister himself was convinced of her good faith and willing to let her go. We must take some means to put a stop to these piracies, and to the fitting out of pirate vessels in English ports. They are always telling us about the inefficiency of a republican government, but as they are acting now, we could stop two pirates to their one. [Applause.] We must, in some way, put a stop to the construction and fitting out of these pirate vessels in English ports to prey upon our commerce, or else consent to keep our ships idle at home. We must stop them—we must act upon the people of England, if we cannot secure a stoppage in any other way. [Applause.]

THE IMMENSE LOSS TO OUR COMMERCE.

I have seen it stated that the loss to our commerce already amounts to $9,000,000—enough to have paid the expense of keeping a large number of vessels at home, and out of the way of these cruisers.

OUR REMEDY.

What shall we do in the matter? Why, when our Government takes a step toward putting a stop to it, (and I believe it is taking that step, now, but it is not in my province to speak of it,) we must aid it in so doing. [Great applause.] We, the people, are the Government in this matter, and when our Government gets ready to take a step, we must get ready to sustain it. [Applause.]

FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF ENGLAND.

England told us what to do when we took Mason and Slidell, and she thought there was a likelihood to be war. She stopped exportation of those articles which she thought we wanted, and which she had allowed to be exported before. Let us do the same thing. [Applause.]

PROCLAIM NON-INTERCOURSE—STOP SUPPLIES OF FOOD.

Let us proclaim non-intercourse, so that no ounce of American food shall ever by any accident get into an Englishman's mouth, until these piracies cease. [Laughter and applause.]

[A voice: "Say that again!"]

GEN. BUTLER: I never say anything, my friends that I am afraid to say again. [Applause.] I repeat—let us proclaim non-intercourse, so that no ounce of American food shall by any accident get into an Englishman's mouth, until these piracies are stopped. [Applause.] That we have a right to do; and when we ever do do it, my word for it, the English Government will find out where these vessels are going to, and they will write

209

to the Emperor of China upon the subject. [Applause.] But I hear some objectors say, "If you proclaim non-intercourse, England may go to war." Now, I am not to be frightened twice running. [Laughter.] I got frightened a little better than a year ago, but I have gotten over it. [Great laughter.] Further, this is a necessity; for we must keep our ships at home in some form to save them from these piracies, when a dozen of these privateers get loose upon the seas. It will become a war measure which any nation, under any law, under any construction, would warrant our right to enforce.

ALL OTHER NATIONS BUT ENGLAND BEHAVING WELL.

And this course should be adopted toward the English nation alone, for I have never heard of any blockade runners under the French flag, nor under the Russian flag, nor under the Austrian flag, nor under the Greek flag. No! not even the Turks will do it. [Applause.] Therefore, I have ventured to suggest the adoption of this course, for your consideration as a possible, aye, not only possible, but, unless this state of things has a remedy, a *probable* event; for we must see to it that we protect ourselves and take a manly place among the nations of the earth. [Applause.] But I hear some friend of mine say, "I am afraid your scheme would bring down our provisions; and if we do not export them to England we shall find our western markets still more depressed." Allow me, with great deference to your judgment, gentlemen, to suggest a remedy for that at the same time.

EXPORTATION OF GOLD TO BE PROHIBITED — THE WEST TO REAP THE ADVANTAGE.

I would suggest that the exportation of gold be prohibited, and then there would be nothing to forward to meet the bills of exchange and pay for the goods we have bought, except our provisions. And, taking a hint from one of your best and most successful merchants, we could pay for our silks and satins in butter, and lard, and corn, and beef, and pork, and bring up the prices in the West, so that they could afford to pay the increased tariff in bringing them forward now rendered necessary, I suppose, upon your railroads. [Applause.] And if our fair sisters and daughters will dress in silks, and satins, and laces, they will not feel any more troubled that a portion of the price goes to the Western farmer to enhance his gains instead of going into the coffers of a Jew Banker in Wall street. [Applause.]

OUR LEADING POLITICIANS TAMPERING WITH ENGLAND FOR A DISRUPTION OF THE UNION.

You will observe, my friends, that in the list of grievances with which I charge England, I have not charged her with tampering with our leading politicians. [Laughter.] So far as any evidence I have, I don't know that she is guilty; but what shall we say of our leading politicians that have tampered with her? [Laughter.] I have read of it in the letters of Lord Lyons with much surprise — with more surprise than has been excited in me by any other fact of this war. I had, somehow, got an inkling of the various things that came up in previous instances, so I was not very much surprised at them; but when I so read a statement, deliberately put forward, that here in New York — leading politicians had consulted with the British minister as to how these United States could be separated and

broken up, every drop of blood in my veins boiled; and I would have liked to have met that leading politician. [Tremendous applause.] I do not know that Lord Lyons is to blame. I suppose, sir, if a man comes to one of your clerks and offers to go into partnership with him to rob your neighbor's bank, and he reports him to you, you do not blame the clerk; but what do you do with the man who makes the offer? [Laughter.]

[A voice: "Hang him!"]

HOW WASHINGTON MET SUCH TRAITORS.

I think we had better take a lesson from the action of Washington's administration — when the French Minister, M. Genet, undertook even to address the people of the United States by letter, complaint was made to his government, and he was recalled, and a law was passed preventing, for all future time, any interference by foreign diplomatists with the people of the United States.

THE PROPOSITION OF THE DEMOCRATIC POLITICIANS THAT THE BRITISH SHOULD AID IN THE DESTRUCTION OF OUR GOVERNMENT.

I want to be understood—I have no evidence of any interference on the part of Lord Lyons; but he says in his letter to Earl Russell that, both before and after a certain event, leading politicians came to him and desired that he would do what—(I am giving the substance and not words)—desired that he would request his Government not to interfere between the North and South. Why? Because it would aid the country not to interfere? No! Because, if England did interfere, the country would spurn the interference, and be stronger than ever to crush the rebellion. Mark again the insidious way in which the point was put. They knew how we felt because of the action of England—they knew that the heart of this people beat true to the Constitution, and that it could not brook any interference on the part of England. What, then, did these politicians do? They asked the British Minister to use the influence of British diplomacy to induce other nations to interfere, but to take care that Great Britain should keep out of sight, lest we should see the cat under the meal. [Laughter.] This is precisely the proposition that they made. You observe, that in speaking of these men, I have, up to this moment, used the word politicians: What kind of politicians? [A voice, "Copperheads." Hisses and groans.] They cannot be Democratic politicians. ["Of course, they cannot."]

LORD LYONS CALLS THEM CONSERVATIVE POLITICIANS.

How I should like to hear Andrew Jackson say a few words upon such politicians who call themselves Democrats! ["He would hang them."] No, I don't think he would have an opportunity to do so; he never would be able to catch them. [Laughter.] I have felt it my duty here in the city of New York, because of the interest I have in public affairs, to call attention to this most extraordinary fact — that there are men in the community so lost to patriotism, so bound up in the traditions of party, so selfish, as to be willing to tamper with Great Britain in order to bring about the separation of this country. It is the most alarming fact that I have yet seen. I had rather see a hundred thousand men set in the field on the rebel side — aye, I had rather see Great Britain armed against us openly, as she is covertly — than to be forced to believe that there are amongst us such men as these, lineal descendants of Judas Iscariot, intermarried with the race of Benedict Arnold. ["Wood," "Brooks."]

BECAUSE OF THE TREACHERY OF POLITICIANS THE PEOPLE MUST STAND BY THE GOVERNMENT.

It has shown me a great danger with which we are threatened, and I call upon all true men to sustain the Government — to be loyal to the Government. [Loud cheers.] As you, Sir, were pleased to say, the present Government was not the Government of my choice — I did not vote for it, or for any part of it; but it is the Government of my country, it is the only organ by which I can exert the force of the country to protect its integrity; and as long as I believe that Government to be honestly administered, I will throw a mantle over any mistakes that I may think it has made, and support it heartily, with hand and purse, so help me God! [Prolonged cheering.]

WHAT IS LOYALTY TO THE GOVERNMENT?

I have no loyalty to any man or men; my loyalty is to the Government; and it makes no difference to me who the people have chosen to administer the Government, so long as the choice has been constitutionally made, and the persons so chosen hold their places and powers. I am a traitor and a false man if I falter in my support. [Applause.] This is what I understand to be loyalty to a Government; and I was sorry to learn, as I did the other day, that there was a man in New York who professed not to know the meaning of the word loyalty. [Hisses, groans, and cries of "Wood."] I desire to say here that it is the duty of every man to be *loyal* to the Government, to sustain it, to pardon its errors, and help it to rectify them, and to do all he can to aid it in carrying the country on in the course of glory and grandeur in which it was started by our fathers.

NO FRIEND OF HIS COUNTRY CAN OPPOSE IT IN TIME OF WAR.

Let me say to you, my friends — to you, young men, that no man who opposed his country in time of war ever prospered. ["That's so."] The Tory of the Revolution, the Hartford Conventionist, of 1812, the immortal seven who voted against the supplies for the Mexican War — all history is against these men. Let no politician of our day put himself in the way of the march of this country to glory and greatness, for whoever does so will surely be crushed. The course of our nation is onward, and let him who opposes it beware.

"The mower mows on — though the adder may writhe,
Or the copperhead coil round the blade of his scythe."

[Loud applause.] It only remains, sir, for me to repeat the expression of my gratitude to you and the citizens of New York here assembled, for the kindness with which you and they have received me and listened to me, for which, please, again accept my thanks. [Prolonged cheering.]

At the conclusion of Gen. BUTLER's address the Glee Club sang with fine effect, an original patriotic song, which was received with general favor by the audience, who then called variously for BRADY, VAN BUREN, and other popular favorites; but, in accordance with the plan of the evening, the Mayor promptly adjourned the meeting, while hundreds availed themselves of the opportunity to shake Gen. BUTLER by the hand, and congratulate him on his absolute refutation of the slanders of the rebels of the South and the Copperheads of the North.

ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF NEW ORLEANS.

Citizens of New Orleans:

It may not be inappropriate, as it is not inopportune in occasion that there should be addressed to you a few words at parting, by one whose name is to be hereafter indissolubly connected with your city.

I shall speak in no bitterness, because I am not conscious of a single personal animosity. Commanding the Army of the Gulf, I found you captured, but not surrendered; conquered, but not orderly; relieved from the presence of an army, but incapable of taking care of yourselves. So far from it, you had called upon a Foreign Legion to protect you from yourselves. I restored order, punished crime, opened commerce, brought provisions to your starving people, reformed your currency, and gave you quiet protection, such as you had not enjoyed for many years.

While doing this, my soldiers were subjected to obloquy, reproach and insult. And now, speaking to you who know the truth, I here declare, that whoever has quietly remained about his business, affording neither aid nor comfort to the enemies of the United States, has never been interfered with by the soldiers of the United States.

The men who assumed to govern you and to defend your city in arms having fled, some of your women flouted at the presence of those who came to protect them. By a simple Order, (No. 28) I called upon every soldier of this army to treat the women of New Orleans as gentlemen should deal with the sex, with such effect that I now call upon the just-minded ladies of New Orleans to say whether they have ever enjoyed so complete protection and calm quiet for themselves and their families, as since the advent of the United States troops.

The enemies of my country, unrepentant and implacable, I have treated with merited severity. I hold that rebellion is treason, and treason persisted in is *death*. and any punishment short of that due a traitor gives so much clear gain to him from the clemency of the Government. Upon this thesis have I administered the authority of the United States, because of which I am not unconscious of complaint. I do not feel that I have erred in too much harshness, for that harshness has ever been exhibited to disloyal enemies to my country, and not to loyal friends. To be sure, I might have regaled you with the amenities of British civilization, and yet have been within the supposed rules of civilized warfare. You might have been smoked to death in caverns, as were the Covenanters of Scotland, by the command of a General of the Royal House of England, or roasted like the inhabitants of Algiers during the French campaign. Your wives and daughters might have been given over to the ravisher, as were the unfortunate dames of Spain in the Peninsula war; or you might have been

scalped or tomahawked, as our mothers were at Wyoming, by the savage allies of Great Britain, in our own revolution; your property could have been turned over to indiscriminate "loot," like the palace of the Emperor of China; works of art, which adorned your buildings, might have been sent away like the paintings of the Vatican; your sons might have been blown from the mouths of cannon, like the Sepoys at Delhi; and yet all this would have been within the rules of civilized warfare, as practiced by the most polished and the most hypocritical nations of Europe. For such acts, the records of the doings of some of the inhabitants of your city towards the friends of the Union, before my coming, were a sufficient provocative and justification.

But I have not so conducted. On the contrary, the worst punishment inflicted, except for criminal acts punishable by every law, has been banishment, with labor, to a barren island, where I encamped my own soldiers before marching here.

It is true I have levied upon the wealthy rebel, and paid out nearly half a million dollars to feed forty thousand of the starving poor of all nations assembled here, made so by the war.

I saw that this rebellion was a war of the aristocrats against the middling men; of the rich against the poor; a war of the land-owner against the laborer; that it was a struggle for the retention of power in the hands of the few against the many; and I found no conclusion to it save in the subjugation of the few and the disenthralment of the many. I therefore felt no hesitation in taking the substance of the wealthy, who had caused the war, to feed the innocent poor, who had suffered by the war. And I shall now leave you with the proud consciousness that I carry with me the blessings of the humble and loyal under the roof of the cottage and in the cabin of the slave, and so am quite content to incur the sneers of the *salon* or the curses of the rich.

I found you trembling at the terrors of servile insurrection. All danger of this I have prevented by so treating the slave that he had no cause to rebel.

I found the dungeon, the chain, and the lash your only means of enforcing obedience in your servants. I leave them peaceful, laborious, controlled by the laws of kindness and justice.

I have demonstrated that the pestilence can be kept from your borders.

I have added a million of dollars to your wealth in the form of new land from the batture of the Mississippi.

I have cleansed and improved your streets, canals, and public squares, and opened new avenues to unoccupied land.

I have given you freedom of elections, greater than you have ever enjoyed before.

I have caused justice to be administered so impartially, that your own advocates have unanimously complimented the Judges of my appointment.

You have seen, therefore, the benefit of the laws and justice of the Government against which you have rebelled.

Why, then, will you not all return to your allegiance to that Government—not with lip-service, but with your heart?

I conjure you, if you ever desire to see renewed prosperity, giving business to your streets and wharves—if you hope to see your city become again the mart of the Western world, fed by its rivers for more than three thousand miles, draining the commerce of a country greater than the mind of man hath ever conceived—return to your allegiance.

If you desire to leave to your children the inheritance you received of your fathers—a stable Constitutional Government—if you desire that they should be in the future a portion of the greatest empire the sun ever shone upon—return to your allegiance.

There is but one thing that stands in the way.

There is but one thing that at this hour stands between you and the Government, and that is Slavery.

The institution, cursed of God, which has taken its last refuge here, in His providence will be rooted out as the tares from the wheat, although the wheat be torn up with it.

I have given much thought to this subject.

I came among you, by teachings, by habit of mind, by political position, by social affinity, inclined to sustain your domestic laws, if, by possibility, they might be with safety to the Union.

Months of experience and of observation have forced the conviction that the existence of Slavery is incompatible with the safety either of yourselves or of the Union. As the system has gradually grown to its present huge dimensions, it were best if it could be gradually removed; but it is better, far better, that it should be taken out at once, than that it should longer vitiate the social, political and family relations of your country. I am speaking with no philanthropic views as regards the slave, but simply of the effect of Slavery on the master. See for yourselves.

Look around you and say whether this saddening, deadening influence has not all but destroyed the very frame-work of your society.

I am speaking the farewell words of one who has shown his devotion to his country, at the peril of his life and fortune, who in these words can have neither hope nor interest, save the good of those whom he addresses; and let me here repeat, with all the solemnity of an appeal to Heaven to bear me witness, that such are the views forced upon me by experience.

Come, then, to the unconditional support of the Government. Take into your own hands your own institutions; re-model them according to the laws of nations and of God, and thus attain that great prosperity assured to you by geographical position, only a portion of which was heretofore yours.

BENJ. F. BUTLER.

LB D '05

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 012 028 974 3